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TENTH PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN LIBERIA

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted in pursuance of paragraph 2 of Security Council resolution 972 (1995) of 13 January 1995, by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) for a period of three months, until 13 April. It covers the main developments in Liberia since my report of 24 February 1995 (S/1995/158), in which I provided a detailed analysis of the status of the peace process in that country and submitted, for the consideration of the Security Council, a number of options regarding the future role of UNOMIL.

II. POLITICAL ASPECTS

A. Installation of the Council of State

2. Under the Accra agreement (S/1995/7, annexes I and II) signed by the Liberian faction and political leaders on 21 December 1994, a new Council of State was to have been installed by 11 January 1995. As noted in my report of 24 February (S/1995/158), the parties met in Accra in January, under the auspices of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to decide on the membership of the Council. Despite the efforts of the Chairman of ECOWAS, President Jerry Rawlings of Ghana, and other ECOWAS leaders, the parties were unable to agree on that issue.

3. One of the nominees to the Council, Chief Tamba Tailor, has since undertaken extensive consultations with the faction and political leaders, as well as other influential Liberians, with a view to breaking the impasse that has prevented installation of the Council. These efforts, however, have so far not been successful.

4. The installation of the Council of State is an essential step in the implementation of the Accra agreement. Since signing that agreement, the parties have failed both to agree on the membership of the Council and to undertake the preparatory work necessary for the implementation of the agreement's other provisions.

B. ECOWAS summit

5. The Security Council, in its resolution 972 (1995), expressed the hope that the member States of ECOWAS would convene a summit with a view to harmonizing their policies on Liberia, including tightening the application of the arms embargo. On 11 March 1995 in Copenhagen, President Rawlings and I exchanged views on this subject and agreed that, subject to the concurrence of the Head of State of Nigeria, the summit might be held in Abuja. We also agreed that it should take place as soon as possible and should bring together the Heads of State of the ECOWAS Committee of Nine and also involve the leaders of the Liberian parties.

6. On 23 March, my Special Representative for Liberia, Mr. Anthony Nyakyi, delivered a message from me to the Nigerian Head of State, General Sani Abacha, suggesting that the Government of Nigeria host the summit. General Abacha welcomed my proposal and indicated that he would make every effort to cooperate with the Chairman of ECOWAS to ensure that the summit was a success. The Chairman of ECOWAS is presently consulting with the other ECOWAS members to prepare the summit and achieve a consensus on its agenda.

III. MILITARY ASPECTS

7. The cease-fire which, in accordance with the Accra agreement, came into effect on 28 December 1994, generally held during the first few weeks of the new year, despite low-level skirmishes between the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and the Liberian Peace Council (LPC) in the south-eastern region. In recent weeks, however, increased fighting has been reported between the NPFL and General Roosevelt Johnson's wing of the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO-J) in Bong county; between the NPFL and LPC in Grand Bassa and Rivercess counties; and between ULIMO-J and General Alhaji Kromah's wing of ULIMO (ULIMO-K) in Grand Cape Mount, Lower Lofa and Bomi counties. Fighting has also been reported between the NPFL and ULIMO-K in Voinjama and in other parts of northern Lofa county. The fighting has resulted in a large influx of displaced persons to the areas controlled by the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) of Buchanan, Kakata and Tubmanburg (see map at annex I).

8. UNOMIL and ECOMOG have appealed to the factions to observe the commitments they made only three months ago under the Accra agreement and to cease fighting. They have also met with individual faction leaders to urge them to ensure that their combatants do not target innocent civilians.

9. UNOMIL is presently composed of 86 military observers (see annex II), who are deployed at team sites in Buchanan (5), Kakata (5) and Monrovia (67), as

well as Spriggs Payne airport (4) and the port of Monrovia (5). My Special Representative and the Chief Military Observer have attempted to re-establish the Cease-fire Violations Committee, which, in accordance with the Cotonou and later agreements, is to be chaired by UNOMIL and is to include representation from ECOMOG and each of the parties. Towards this end, UNOMIL has repeatedly requested the faction leaders to designate their representatives to the Committee. But despite these requests, some of the factions have still not done so. In the absence of a functioning Cease-fire Violations Committee, the Chief Military Observer of UNOMIL has made every effort, in consultation with ECOMOG and the factions, to investigate all reported violations.

10. As noted in my last report, the Government of the United Republic of Tanzania has informed me of its intention to withdraw its troops from ECOMOG. Since then, the Government of Uganda has indicated that it too wishes to withdraw. This would bring the reported strength of ECOMOG down from 8,430 to approximately 6,843 all ranks. With the support of the Government of the United States of America (which has provided the necessary resources through the Trust Fund for the Implementation of the Cotonou Agreement on Liberia), arrangements are now under way to repatriate these two contingents to their home countries.

IV. HUMAN RIGHTS

11. The Liberian media have reported that a massacre, related to fighting between the two wings of ULIMO, took place in Meenkor town in Grand Cape Mount county in early March. UNOMIL has put together an ad hoc team, involving ECOMOG and the relevant factions, to investigate the incident. A similar incident occurred on the outskirts of Monrovia in December 1994, when 48 civilians, nearly half of them children, were reportedly killed by unknown assailants. There have also been reports, especially from internally displaced persons, of human rights violations (including rape, torture and the killing of civilians) in other parts of Liberia.

12. Under resolution 866 (1993) of 22 September 1993, the Security Council requested UNOMIL to report on major violations of humanitarian law. Given the frequency of reported human rights violations in Liberia, I have decided to appoint a legal/human rights officer to UNOMIL. This officer will, among other things, work with UNOMIL military staff, ECOMOG, the Liberian National Transitional Government and local community groups to investigate these reports.

V. HUMANITARIAN ASPECTS

13. Following clashes in or around key locations, including Buchanan, Tubmanburg and the Bong Mines area, the number of persons in need of assistance has risen significantly. While the relief community has taken special measures to respond to these developments, the overall humanitarian assistance programme in Liberia continues to be severely hampered by the security situation in areas controlled by the factions.

14. Since January 1995, 67,000 persons have sought refuge in Buchanan, bringing its population to 180,000 - more than four times its pre-war size.

Approximately 90,000 persons live in shelters provided by national authorities and the international relief community. The United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Liberia has set up a special task force composed of United Nations organizations, non-governmental organizations and national authorities to address the needs of these new arrivals. In addition to implementing immediate emergency programmes in the food, shelter, and water and sanitation sectors, the task force established plans for income-generating quick impact projects and trauma counselling for particularly vulnerable groups.

15. In recent weeks, 10,000 persons have fled to Tubmanburg, raising the number of internally displaced there to 50,000. The humanitarian assistance community has been able to provide relief supplies to this group using armed ECOMOG escorts.

16. While fighting among the factions increases the number of internally displaced and locally affected persons, the resources available to meet emergency needs are fast becoming inadequate. The United Nations consolidated inter-agency appeal for Liberia, which I launched last January, sought US$ 65 million for United Nations organizations to implement emergency programmes for the period from January to June 1995. As of 22 March, only 41 per cent of that total had been pledged or contributed by the international community.

17. The question of resources has also complicated the delivery of food to camps for internally displaced persons. As the next consignment of rice is not due to arrive in Monrovia until July 1995, the overall quantity of rice distributed is being reduced.

18. During the reporting period, my Special Representative and the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator continued their efforts to increase access to populations in need in areas controlled by the factions. In discussions with faction representatives, they continue to stress the need for sustained security guarantees for relief supplies, equipment and personnel. This is the minimum requirement for ensuring that sufficient quantities of life-saving assistance reach the civilian population.

VI. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

19. In its resolution 49/232 of 23 December 1994, the General Assembly authorized me to enter into commitments at a rate not to exceed $1,593,800 gross ($1,511,100 net) per month for a period of six months from 14 January to 13 July 1995 for the maintenance of UNOMIL, should the Security Council decide to extend the mission's mandate.

20. As of 28 March 1995, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNOMIL special account amounted to $6.9 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peace-keeping operations on 28 March 1995 was $1,663 million. In order to provide UNOMIL with the necessary cash flow, a total of $2 million has been borrowed from the Peace-keeping Reserve Fund. This loan remains unpaid.

21. Voluntary contributions received by the Trust Fund for the Implementation of the Cotonou Agreement on Liberia amounted to $23.3 million as of 28 March 1995, and disbursements of $17.9 million have been authorized. The difference includes $4.97 million received from the Government of the United States. This contribution was earmarked for the repatriation of the Tanzanian and Ugandan contingents of ECOMOG and can be used only for that purpose. No other contribution has been received since my last report.

VII. OBSERVATIONS

22. The peace process in Liberia remains at an impasse. Since my last report, military activities have intensified throughout the country and the overall situation has further deteriorated. The parties have also failed to implement one of the basic steps of the agreement signed in Accra on 21 December: the installation of a new Council of State. The civilian population continues to suffer and the factions' military activities have impeded the delivery of essential relief items to most areas of the country other than Buchanan, Kakata and Monrovia.

23. It is essential that the ECOWAS summit should be a much-needed catalyst to re-start the peace process and achieve concrete results by harmonizing the policies of ECOWAS member States and installing the Council of State. I urge the member States concerned to hold the summit in the near future and to do all they can to ensure that it is a success.

24. In my last report (S/1995/158), I set out a number of options on the role which UNOMIL could play in Liberia after the expiry of its present mandate on 13 April. In this connection, I stated, inter alia, that if the current political stalemate were to continue, the Security Council might wish to consider either the withdrawal of UNOMIL or a further reduction of its military component until the parties clearly demonstrated the political will necessary to reactivate the peace process.

25. It could be argued that the present political impasse and the breakdown of the cease-fire make it necessary for the Security Council to address these options now. However, the proposed ECOWAS summit does, as indicated above, offer a possibility that the peace process may shortly be re-launched. In these circumstances, I think that it would be premature to withdraw UNOMIL at this stage, which would signal to ECOWAS and the Liberian people that the international community had given up its efforts to assist in finding a peaceful solution to the conflict in Liberia.

26. I accordingly recommend that the Security Council extend the mandate of UNOMIL until 30 June 1995. However, given the fact that the present security situation prevents UNOMIL from carrying out part of its mandate, it is my intention to reduce its military strength by about 20 observers. As soon as the situation improves, the military component of UNOMIL will be strengthened as necessary.

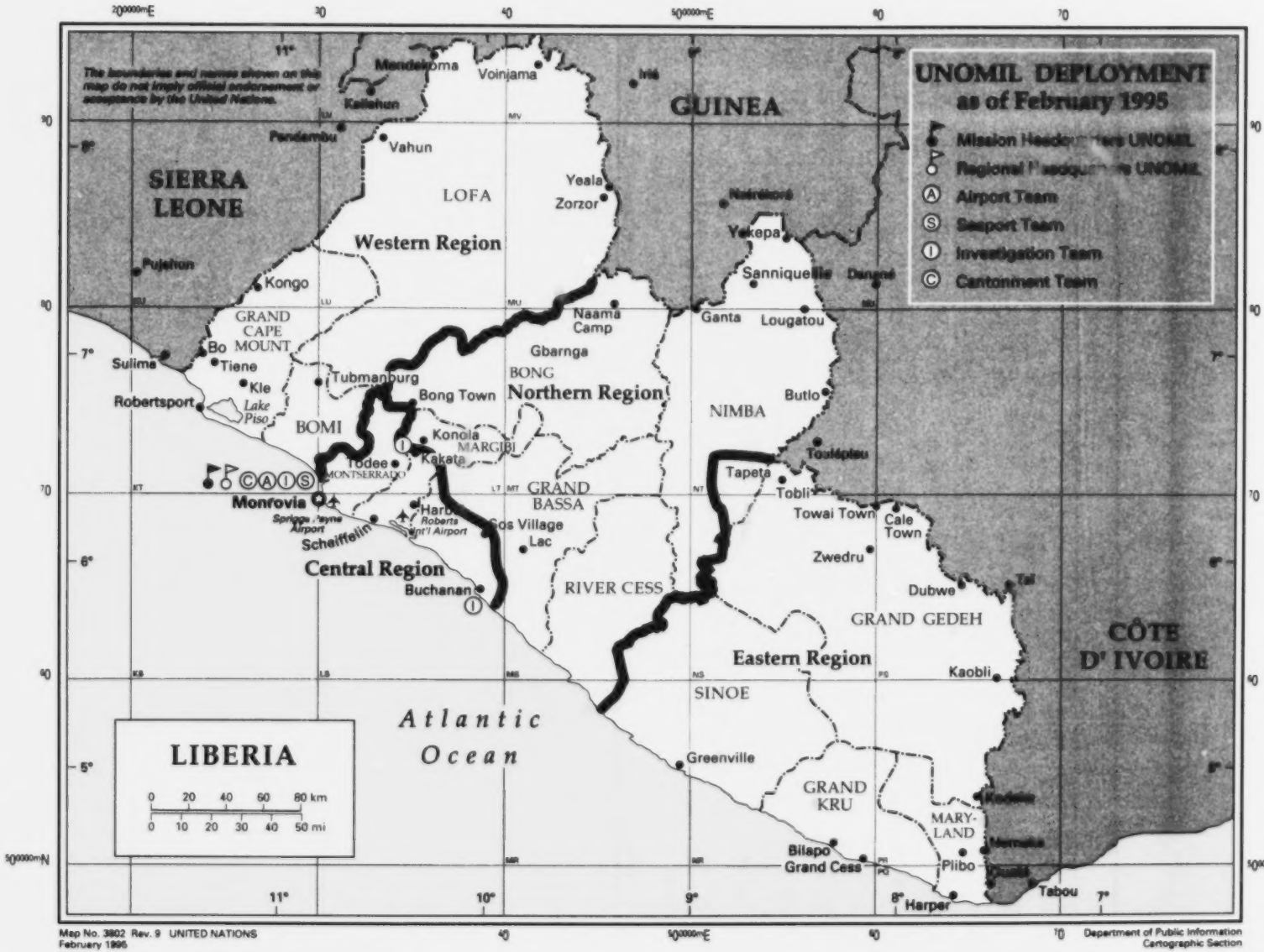
27. It is my hope that, during this period, ECOWAS will have sufficient time to prepare for and convene its summit and that the parties will finally decide

to cooperate fully with the ongoing efforts of ECOWAS and the international community to restore peace in Liberia. I urge the parties to use this period to install the Council of State, re-establish an effective cease-fire and take concrete steps towards the implementation of the other provisions of the Accra agreement.

28. The continuing rivalry and intransigence of the faction and political leaders have taken a heavy toll on the Liberian people. I urge them to reflect on the responsibility which they personally bear for the deaths of hundreds of thousands of their people, the destruction of their country's economy and infrastructure and the destabilizing effects on its neighbours. They are now at a crossroads and the decision of the Security Council on the future role of the United Nations in Liberia will depend on the political will they demonstrate in advancing the peace process.

29. In closing, I should like to thank my Special Representative, the Chief Military Observer and the civilian and military staff of UNOMIL for the contribution they are making, under very difficult circumstances, to the peace process in Liberia. I should also like to pay tribute to the Chairman of ECOWAS, President Rawlings of Ghana, for his untiring efforts to further the Liberian peace process.

Annex I



Map No. 3802 Rev. 9 UNITED NATIONS
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Annex II

Composition of military component of UNOMIL as at April 1995

	Observers	Others	Total
Bangladesh	8	7	15
China	5		5
Czech Republic	6		6
Egypt	7		7
Guinea-Bissau	5		5
India	6		6
Jordan	9		9
Kenya	9	2	11
Malaysia	8		8
Pakistan	8		8
Uruguay	6		6
Total	77	9	86